

Hamilton Field, Quartermaster's Garage
(Facility No. 302)
2nd Street, northeast of Escolta Avenue
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-AI

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
IAI-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Quartermaster's Garage
(Facility No. 302)

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Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Quartermaster's Garage
Facility No. 302 (2nd Street, northeast of Escolta Avenue intersection)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Present Owner: General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance:

This building is stylistically reminiscent of stables constructed by the U. S. Cavalry at earlier military reservations throughout the West, which were in turn inspired by the stable architecture of the Spanish *presidio* during colonial times. The additions built during 1942 are evident, but they reflect the construction occurring in preparation for the war effort and do not significantly alter the original appearance of the building.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-F for a condensed general Statement of Significance.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: Construction on the Quartermaster's Garage was completed on March 22, 1934 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1933-1971).
2. Architect: Hamilton Field was designed under the guidance of Captain Howard B. Nurse, Construction Quartermaster. He was assisted by a corps of civilians headed by H. P. Spencer, Chief Architect, and F. W. Salfinger, Chief Engineer. Captain F. C. Petes and Lieutenant J. H. Veal of the Quartermaster's Corps were detailed to Marin County by the War Department to assist Nurse (*Novato Advance* May 28, 1932). Landscaping efforts were directed by C. C. Stevens, a local landscape engineer, using plantings chosen by Nurse and donated by Marin County citizens.
3. Original Owner: Hamilton Field is on land originally owned by private individuals and companies. In 1930, the California Packing Company sold 630 acres of land to Marin County to use to entice the Army to build on the site. An additional 161 acres were purchased from Dr. T. Peter and Julia Bodkin. These parcels were combined with other County-owned land, and in 1932 Marin County sold a 927-acre parcel of land to the Department of the Army for \$1.00 for use by the Army Air Corps as an air field. In 1947 Hamilton Air Field was transferred to the newly-formed U. S. Air Force and renamed Hamilton Air Force Base. In 1974 the U. S. Congress declared the installation excess to military needs and closed the base (Maniery et al. 1993). Since base closure the garage has been held under the jurisdiction of the General Services Administration.
4. Builder, Contractor, Supplier: The Quartermaster's Garage was built by Frank Reilley. Reilley was awarded the contract on October 30, 1933, for a bid of \$16,341. He finished the job five months later for a total cost of \$16,510.09, slightly over budget. Extensive improvements were made by the Air Corps in 1942. This work was completed in November, 1942, for a cost of \$35,517.96 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1957-1971).
5. Original Plans and Construction: Copies of Nurse's original plans for this building are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato. The original ink on vellum drawings were not located. Pencil on tracing paper drawing of the 1942 additions are also at the National Archives.
6. Alterations/Additions: The two covered parking areas were connected in 1942 by the construction of a central building with low-pitched front gable frame truss roof

covered with composition paper. This building has central double sliding doors, with a louver in the gable end. Two additions made to the northeast rear of the building in 1942 consist of two-story frame structures with low-gable and shed roofs and 1/1 wood frame sash windows. Although these additions obscure the 1930s rear facade from view, they reflect the construction occurring during the war and do not significantly alter the overall original appearance of the building. In addition, fluorescent lighting fixtures were installed in 1955, replacing drop canopy lights, and two original ceiling-mounted heaters were removed and replaced in 1962 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1933-1971). Asbestos shingles were added over the original board siding on the warehouse addition in the 1950s.

B. Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Nurse and his team of architects designed reinforced concrete buildings covered with white stucco and red tile roofs and other features such as arcades and ornamental door surrounds in a basic Spanish Colonial Revival style. This style was used by Captain Nurse at Randolph Field in Texas and by other Army architects at various bases (Fine and Remington 1972:48; Thomason and Associates 1993). Captain Nurse blended the standard Colonial Revival design with elements borrowed from Moorish, Spanish Churrigueresque, Mission, and Art Moderne styles, creating a unique Spanish Eclectic look.

Buildings in the industrial area are built of reinforced concrete on concrete piers and foundations; steel bars were used during construction in consideration of the seismic activity of the region. Even though industrial in function, these buildings have design elements consistent with the Spanish Eclectic theme of the base.

2. Condition of fabric: Generally, the garage is in good condition. It is missing the front window grilles, wood gates, and a back staircase and second story landing. Some original door hardware is missing and a few exterior rear windows are broken and boarded. Paint is peeling off the exterior facade in a few places.

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B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Quartermaster's Garage consists of three rectilinear structures; two original one-story covered parking bays on the northwest and southeast elevations and a central connecting structure and two-story rear addition that were completed in 1942. The entire structure measures 113 feet 6 inches (maximum width) by 363 feet 11 inches. The original front elevation consisted of the two identical covered parking areas with stucco facades with terra cotta pipe ventilators, recessed niches, low-pitched gable roofs, and wooden central gateway. The warehouse structure, which connects the original parking bays, is framed with a low-pitched gable roof and large central warehouse doors.

2. Foundation: The foundation of the building is concrete pier with a two-foot base, reinforced with ½-inch steel bars and 23 column post footings in the interior. The post footings have a 30-inch-square concrete base, 10 inches thick, that extends 34 inches below the floor. The footing has four ½-inch steel bars for reinforcement. An eight- by eight-inch post is set in each footing.

3. Walls: The exterior walls of the original building consist of poured-in-place concrete coated with cementitious stucco rendered with a smooth face. Walls vary from six inches thick at the shop and office to eight inches thick at the main garage area. The additions are redwood frame originally covered with horizontal board siding but now clad with asbestos shingle siding. Exterior detailing on the original facades of the identical parking bays are decorated with shell-patterned recessed niches once covered with iron grille railings below six decorative terra cotta pipe roof vents. A central gate, flanked by the two bays, is supported by concrete posts with decorative cast concrete finials. The posts and finials are coated with stucco. The original wood gates are missing but were made of vertical boards with decorative exterior wrought iron hinges and anchors.

4. Structural systems, framing: The original building is supported by reinforced eight-inch concrete columns, infilled with load-bearing poured-in-place reinforced concrete. The parking bay roofs and the central warehouse are supported by a wooden truss system with four- by six-inch rafters on 12-foot 6-inch trusses. In addition, eight-inch wood columns on a concrete base, spaced 25 feet apart, support the central warehouse.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Exterior loading docks are two feet six inches by 21 feet seven inches and are four feet high. The docks are elevated on reinforced concrete piers set in square concrete footings. Interior platforms are 6 feet wide and 33 feet 8 inches long and are 3.5 feet high. A ramp leads from two platforms to the main floor. Concrete stoops provide access to personnel doors.

6. Chimneys: Metal mechanical vents, some with large circular caps, are located on the roof.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Originally, the primary entrances was through central wooden gates, one on each end (no longer extant), which provided access to the open garage parking bays. After the construction of the warehouse, the primary access was through wood rolling warehouse doors supported on an I-beam track. Personnel doors are standard solid-core wood doors with four lights over three recessed panels and concrete sills. Doors on the rear addition have five recessed panels. Two warehouse doors (8 feet 2 inches by 10 feet 4 inches) and loading bays on the northwest elevation were added to the building in 1942, after its original construction.

b. Windows/shutters: Windows on the north and east side additions are double hung wood sash windows with four lights; those on the original shop are metal frame casement windows with four lights covered with iron grilles (added in 1941), and have protruding cast concrete sills. Clerestory windows with multi-lights run the length of the warehouse addition, providing light to the interior.

8. Roof:

a. Shape/covering: The two parking bays and the central connecting warehouse structure have low-pitched front gable roofs. Those on the parking bays are covered with composition shingles; the warehouse is covered with composition paper. The roofs on the two-story addition are low-pitched gable and shed, covered with composition paper. This addition has exposed rafters.

b. Cornice/eaves: The roof has overhanging eaves with eave boards in the side addition and exposed rafters on the rear. There is a simple cornice molding. The gutters are copper and drain into redwood downspouts.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. First Floor: As originally designed, the garage consisted of two long parallel rectangular structures which provided covered parking for 52 motor vehicles. A stock room, office, and shop were located on the central southeast side. A central driveway, with gates at either end, provided access to the parking bays. Additions were made to both sides of the office and shop bay in the early 1940s. The rear addition was also added in the early 1940s. These additions provided additional office space for the warehouse.

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- b. **Second Floor:** The second story rear addition is divided into several offices with temporary partition walls and has a bathroom.
2. **Stairways:** The original garage was at ground level and had no stairs. An exterior wood staircase provided access to the second story addition but has been removed. Interior stairs at the rear of the warehouse access the second floor. These stairs have wood treads and risers and a two-inch pipe metal railing attached to the wall.
3. **Flooring:** The flooring in the original shop and latrine is four-inch-thick concrete slab with a smooth finish. The main garage/warehouse floor is a six-inch-thick asphalt and concrete floor. Floor coverings in the additions are wood covered with linoleum tiles.
4. **Wall/ceiling finish:** The walls and ceilings in the original latrine and office are metal lath and plaster. The ceilings of the parking bays and warehouse are open to the roof trusses. Ceilings and wall coverings in the additions consist of wood frame covered with boards and painted white.
5. **Openings:**
 - a. **Doorways/doors:** Two overhead panel doors provide access to the original shop; while the office and latrine doors are solid core wood with recessed panels. Doors in the two-story addition have three recessed panels below four lights or five recessed panels.
 - b. **Windows:** Clerestory windows provide natural light to the warehouse space. Interior windows provide light from the warehouses to the shops and offices. All are wood sash.
6. **Decorative features/trim:** None.
7. **Hardware:** Exterior and door hardware consists of a nickel-plated circular knob and a rectangular escutcheon. The original electric plates are plastic.
8. **Mechanical equipment:**
 - a. **Heating:** The main warehouse is heated by ceiling-mounted gas space heaters. These are "Rezinor" units with thermostat control and replaced "Humphries" heaters. The office and shop were originally heated by gas steam radiators. The second story addition is heated by a "Peerless" free-standing gas heater.

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b. Ventilation: Ventilation to the building is provided by roof vents constructed from six terra cotta four-inch pipes (shaped to form a triangle) in each front gable end of the parking bays, wooden louvers beneath the gable peaks in either end of the warehouse addition, and metal ventilators on the roof. The rear two-story additions have two terra cotta pipe vents in the gable ends.

c. Lighting: Wiring is through exposed conduits. There were three types of light fixtures when the garage was first completed. Ceiling-mounted fixtures with metal canopies and circular milk glass balls with a single bulb were installed in the latrines and were a standard Type HI-1 fixture. A similar style of lights were installed in the rear addition. Standard Type E3-1 lights were installed in the office. These were chain suspended lights with metal canopies and milk glass "schoolhouse" globes. The garage floors were lit by Type I-3 drop lights with metal cone-shaped shades suspended by chains from roof trusses. In February, 1955, the drop lights were replaced with 130 fluorescent lights. These are two-tube, eight-foot-long "Slimline Industrial" types with porcelain enamel reflectors with ballasts.

e. Plumbing: The plumbing consists of one-inch water pipes and six-inch sewer pipes leading to sinks and drinking fountains in the shop, and to the latrine. The shop has a free-standing drinking fountain with a black-painted sheet metal body and a porcelain top. A porcelain tag on the front identifies it as a SUNROC, made by Morrison Company in Glenriddle, Pennsylvania. The latrine on the main floor contains a "Standard Madera" flush valve toilet, "Standard" floor urinal, and two "Standard" wall-mounted sinks. A wall-mounted tin "Boraxo" soap dispenser is above the sink. An "Olympic" water heater is also located in the shop. The lower floor of the rear addition has a latrine with a wall-mounted sink, "UR" flush valve toilet, and a shower room with a concrete floor and metal fixtures.

9. Original Furnishings: None.

D. Site:

1. General site orientation: The primary facade of the Quartermaster's Garage faces southwest toward Escolta Avenue and 2nd Street. It is situated in the original Spanish Colonial Revival district of Hamilton Army Air Field on a flat site surrounded by rolling hills, on a diagonal with the grid system adjacent to the flight field.

2. Historic landscape design: The Garage is located in the original Quartermaster's area of the air field, within a complex of warehouses, industrial buildings, and asphalt parking lots. A spur of the main line Northern Pacific Railroad line lies adjacent to the building on its northwest elevation. The Industrial area on base was not landscaped and is barren of vegetation, with the exception of volunteer weeds and thistle.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398). Copies of Nurse's plans of this building are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

C. Interviews:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

D. Bibliography:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

Sources cited in this individual report are listed below.

Fine, Jesse, and Lenore Remington

1972 *Army Corps of Engineers: Construction in the U.S.* U.S. Army and World War II, Office of Military History.

Hamilton Facility Cards

1933-1971 Maintenance Cards for Base Facilities. On file, Hamilton Army Air Field Installation Office, Novato, and Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

Maniery, Mary L., Leslie R. Fryman, and Fred Hrusa

1993 *National Register of Historic Places Evaluation, Hamilton Army Air Field Historic District, Marin County, California*. Submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.

Thomason and Associates

1993 *Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas*. Cultural Resource Survey, Final Report. Nashville, Tennessee. On file, State Office of Historic Preservation, Austin, Texas.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

F. Supplemental Material:

See also the project Field Record, roll 77, exposures 9-12.

Copies of representative floor plans of Facility No. 302, dated in the 1930s and prepared by the Quartermaster's General Office are attached to this form. The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

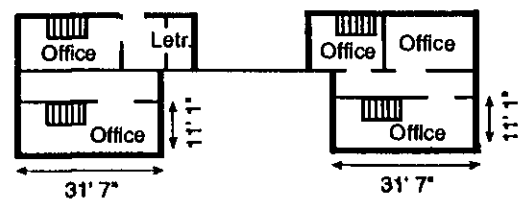
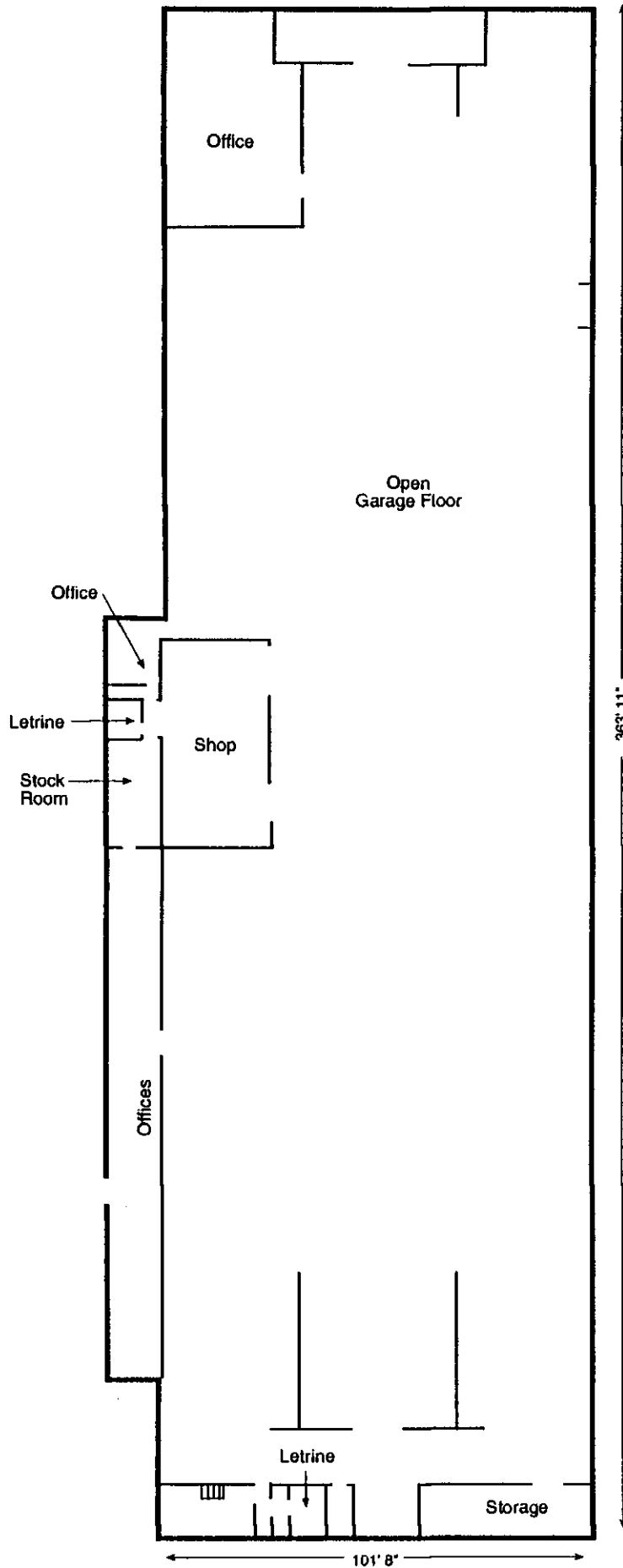
Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration. The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

The title page, Part I, and Part III were prepared by Mary L. Maniery, Historian, PAR Environmental Services, Sacramento. Architectural descriptions in Part II were compiled by Judith Marvin, Historian/Architectural Historian, Foothill Resources, Murphys, California. Descriptions were checked against photographs and plans by Mary L. Maniery and were embellished and corrected, as necessary. Information on historic landscape design was extracted by Mary L. Maniery from a report prepared by Dr. Fred Hrusa, Botanist, PAR

FIRST FLOOR

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SECOND FLOOR

